

August 26, 2003

**San Juan River Basin
Recovery Implementation Program
Coordination Committee
May 23, 2003
Conference Call Summary**



Coordination Committee Members

Joy Nicholopoulos, Chair
Dan Israel
Bob Krakow
Scott McElroy
Tom Pitts
Stanley Pollack
Lester Taylor
Brent Uilenberg
John Whipple
Pat Page, Hydrology Committee Chair
Shirley Mondy, Program Coordinator
Marilyn Greenberg, Program Assistant

Representing: _____

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Water Development Interests
Navajo Nation
Jicarilla Apache Nation
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
State of New Mexico
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Rearing Ponds

Brent Uilenberg explained that, after some research and discussion, the Biology Committee decided to go with new pond construction because new ponds will be easier to harvest. The new pond subcommittee will meet next Friday (May 30th) to finalize a Request For Proposal (RFP) for soliciting the construction of new ponds. The ponds will not be able to be constructed until early FY04. It is estimated that 9 acres of new ponds can be constructed. The \$400,000 that was originally shown for FY03 has been reprogrammed.

Tom Pitts asked if the interested parties in Farmington and other areas will get the RFP? Brent Uilenberg stated that anyone can receive it. It will be ready in 3 or 4 weeks, or more. Once the RFP is available, ads can be placed in the paper and the information can be distributed.

Once the final RFP is ready, a notice will be sent to the committees to ensure that the information can be distributed to private parties who are interested. Shirley Mondy and Brent Uilenberg will ensure a wide distribution of the RFP.

Shortage Sharing

At the last Coordination Committee meeting (February 26, 2003), Pat Page had reported on the primary water users group recommendations for operation of Navajo Dam for 2003. The users have committed to limiting their diversions to a negotiated amount and they agree to share in shortages, in the event of a shortage. All parties have endorsed the agreement as of April 17th. The Navajo Nation approved with the condition that the forbearance language be stricken. The language then had to be re-negotiated with the power plants, who had originally agreed contingent on the forbearance language. The power plants came up with a "principles of implementation" document that says that the power plants will still get a contract from the Jicarilla Apache Nation, and will take a 5% shortage through increased conservation. In return, the power plants will provide a mitigation fund for the irrigators. Everyone has approved the principles of implementation so far. The power plants have set aside \$240,000 for the irrigators, regardless of whether Jicarilla contract water is taken. In addition, \$880,000 is available if PNM takes the maximum amount of the Jicarilla contract water (16,000 af). If less water is taken, the money would be prorated.

Shirley Mondy asked if there is a shortage projected for this year? Pat Page stated that, based on the mid-May projections, the forecasted shortage would be about 8.5 percent (**including the power plants subcontracts with the Jicarilla Apache Nation**). Given this amount of shortage, the irrigators would have to shorten their irrigation season by **an additional 5 - 6 days** and would be compensated out of the mitigation fund. This shortage would relate to a flow in the critical habitat of **approximately 450cfs**.

Tom Pitts requested a copy of the agreement. John Whipple stated that they are still waiting on the final documents. **John Whipple and Pat Page will send a copy of the agreement to the Coordination Committee when the documents are final.**

Draft Contracting Procedures

Brent Uilenberg explained that Tom Pitts has taken a lead role in the contracting procedures subcommittee, which started working last November. Tom Pitts explained that they have produced a draft proposal on how to do contracting that would probably go into effect in 2005. It calls for increased peer review of proposals, provides program guidance in terms of projects that will be started each year, and formalizes the process. RFPs that are developed for new starts each year will be posted in the Federal Business Opportunity and on the listserve. Technical committee members can submit proposals. There will be defined review procedures for new proposals: proposals will be reviewed by Program staff, Reclamation staff, the peer review panel, and the technical committees (who will not review their own proposals). An evaluation and ranking process will be included. Shirley Mondy has sent draft procedures to the technical committees for responses before the next Coordination Committee meeting on July 17th.

Bill Miller's question, per Shirley Mondy, was regarding the several new starts for FY 04. There is a need to look at retention of pikeminnow in the river and pikeminnow augmentation (to evaluate changing where or how to put fish in the river). The Biology Committee would like to know how to proceed for this year. Shirley Mondy explained that a new start would have to be advertised for 45 days to meet contracting regulations.

There are 4 other studies that need to be evaluated as well. Should these be advertised as well? They have all been proposed by the Biology Committee as new starts. There is currently a paragraph written about each topic but more specifics are needed before putting it out for RFP.

There were no objections to putting the four studies out for RFP under these new procedures. Shirley Mondy will work with Bill Miller and Pat Postell (Reclamation Contracting Office) to move these along and will get back to the Coordination Committee to let them know how things are going and what the timeframe will look like.

1. Retention of pikeminnow and enhancement of pikeminnow augmentation efforts.
2. Entrainment at Hogback.
3. Evaluate the need for fish passage at the Fruitland Diversion.
4. Evaluate the need for fish passage at the Arizona Public Service Weir.

Dedication of PNM Fish Passage Structure

Brent Uilenberg was contacted by Rob Ashman to inquire about the San Juan Program's plans for dedication of the PNM Fish Passage. Brent contacted Lisa Martin in the PNM Public Affairs Department. PNM was considering inviting 30 - 40 people, media representatives, having a couple of speakers, and then having a luncheon. Brent called Dale Ryden to determine when fish might be using the passage and Dale suggested that there may be fish movement during July. The Committee discussed holding the dedication around the time of the next Coordination Committee meeting on July 17th. The Committee agreed that this was an excellent opportunity for public relations to show what we are doing on the ground. PNM is very enthusiastic about getting this going. **Shirley Mondy and Brent Uilenberg will work with PNM to make this happen.**

Next Committee Meeting

The next meeting on July 17th was already scheduled for Farmington. The agenda would include reviewing and approving monitoring scopes of work, hydrology scopes of work, and the contracting procedures. This could perhaps be covered in a half day meeting. The other half day could be devoted to the PNM Fish Passage dedication. It was suggested that the dedication begin at 9am and that the Committee could meet at the Civic Center to load into vans in the morning. The Coordination Committee meeting could be held after lunch. Committee members agreed to keep July 17th open for the dedication and the meeting.